

Senate Bill No. 1454

CHAPTER 629

An act to add Section 856.5 to the Fish and Game Code, relating to fish and wildlife.

[Approved by Governor September 26, 2014. Filed with
Secretary of State September 26, 2014.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1454, Gaines. Department of Fish and Wildlife: enforcement: patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems.

Existing law establishes the Department of Fish and Wildlife in the Natural Resources Agency, and generally charges the department with the administration and enforcement of the Fish and Game Code. Existing law provides that all employees of the department designated by the Director of Fish and Wildlife as deputized law enforcement officers are peace officers, as defined.

This bill would authorize the department to install patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems, commonly known as dashboard cameras, in patrol vehicles used by the department's peace officers. The bill would authorize a peace officer to use a patrol vehicle mounted video and audio system to record any communications or other actions involving the officer while the officer is in uniform and acting within the scope of his or her authority. The bill would require the department to adopt a policy to establish standards regarding the activation of patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems and the preservation and retention of recordings from patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems, subject to specified requirements.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 856.5 is added to the Fish and Game Code, to read:

856.5. (a) The department may install patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems, commonly known as dashboard cameras, in patrol vehicles used by peace officers described in Section 856. A peace officer described in Section 856 may use the patrol vehicle mounted video and audio system to record any communications or other actions involving the officer while the officer is in uniform and acting within the scope of his or her authority.

(b) The department shall adopt a policy to establish standards regarding the activation of patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems and the preservation and retention of recordings from patrol vehicle mounted video and audio systems, subject to the following requirements:

(1) Once a patrol vehicle mounted video and audio system has been activated pursuant to standards established by the department pursuant to subdivision (b), the patrol vehicle mounted video and audio system shall record the duration of an encounter.

(2) The department shall retain a recording from a patrol vehicle mounted video and audio system for a minimum of 90 days and a maximum of one year, except if the recording is necessary for a pending, or reasonably foreseeable civil or criminal action, or for training or administrative purposes.

(3) The department shall provide access to a recording from a patrol vehicle mounted video and audio system in accordance with all other provisions of law.